

## FINDING COURAGE TO FIGHT COVID-19

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As Somalia strives to adjust to the new realities of the coronavirus pandemic, ADRA has also prioritized preparedness and promotion of preventive measures in support to government's efforts through the Ministry of Health. During this pandemic, our staff have done an exemplary work to ensure that communities are aware of the virus and the preventive measures that need to be taken. Aden Sahane Ahmed, a project expert in Education, shares his insight as a front line worker.

"When I first heard about the COVID-19, I thought it was a normal flu that would eventually go away. However, as time passed by, I learnt that it's a killer viral disease. When the first case was announced in Somalia, I was shocked as I knew that the health sector was not fully prepared.

As a front-line staff, during this tough and trying moments, I've learnt that teamwork and communication is vital. As I go out with my team to convey the preventive messages on COVID-19, we are afraid due to the risk involved but what drives me the most is the sacrifice and dedication to serve and save lives.



Aden Sahane has been on the frontline conveying COVID -19 awareness messages in the community.

In line with that, I ensure that I observe all the preventive measures like wearing a mask, use of gloves and regularly sanitizing my hands.

"When we started the COVID-19 awareness campaigns, my most inspiring moments was when the target communities accepted the IEC messages and were willing to observe the WHO guidelines like washing their hands and keeping a social distance.



"...As I urge the community members to follow the stipulated guidelines, I also follow the same in my own home to ensure that I keep my family safe."

A billboard with COVID-19 preventive messages, strategically placed in Mogadishu.

However, it was not without challenges. Some of the community members were not convinced that there is such a disease that could be prevented by only washing hands, social distancing and wearing a mask. Despite these challenges, there were those who appreciated our efforts and closely collaborated with us.

As I ventured out to save lives, I knew that I also needed to save my family. I was always worried that I could infect my family. As I urge the community members to follow the stipulated guidelines, I also follow the same in my own home to ensure that I keep my family safe. And that's my message to everyone, 'stay safe and take care of yourself by observing the preventive measures given during this tough times."

ADRA has supported its target communities during this pandemic through awareness creation messages in local radio stations, setting up billboards with COVID-19 preventive messages, public awareness campaigns and distribution of protective items like sanitizers, masks and hand wash facilities.

Aden Sahane Ahmed is a Project Expert in Education and is based in Mogadishu.